

The state of psychiatric care in our country has spawned growing homelessness, more neglect, as well as increasing violence since deinstitutionalization of mental patients occurred over 2 decades ago with no community follow-up.

The gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) and I are working hard to establish a special House task force on serious mental illness. This task force would be responsible for examining the state of our mental health system, especially those who are not being adequately treated. This task force would gather testimony about what America can and should do.

Please support our effort to establish a task force on mental illness. Contact the leadership. Urge them to move so we can begin to repair the tattered dreams of millions of American families.

NATIONAL GAMING IMPACT STUDY COMMISSION

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, well, here we go again. The counterfeit logic of some Washington bureaucrats is once again putting the sovereignty of every state in this Nation at risk.

On January 22 of this year, the Secretary of the Interior unilaterally made a regulatory decision that would literally strip every state of their most fundamental rights, rights established under the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution. It seems the Secretary's new regulation would give him the sole individual authority to approve Indian gaming in any state. Not the voters, not even the governor, nor the elected officials of that state would have a decision.

This unconscionable trampling of the Tenth Amendment is taking reserved rights from us, from our states, from our governor, from our elected officials and unilaterally vesting them in some Washington bureaucrat.

Fortunately, the nonpartisan National Gaming Impact Study Commission, which was created by Congress to study the impacts of gaming, made a bold but necessary policy decision telling the Secretary to rein in his proposed Indian gaming rules and to reestablish fair and equitable relationships between the States and respective Indian tribes.

DRACULA OF CANVAS LAST OFFERING

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, David Bowie and Yoko Ono have sponsored Herman Nish's 6-day Orgy Mystery Theater. In the name of art, 3 bulls and 6 pigs will be castrated, disemboweled, then eaten by a live audience.

A press release says Nish's students will not only paint with the fresh blood of these sacrificed beasts but also their entrails.

Who is this guy teaching? Jeffrey Dahmer? Ridiculous. If that is not enough to massage your Mona Lisa, art critics say this is an improvement over this Dracula of canvas last offering.

My colleagues, this guy decorated beautiful, naked women with the bowels of dead animals. Beam me up. What is next, folks? The Lorena Bobbitt do-it-yourself art expo?

This art business is out of control. We have gone from Michelangelo and Picasso to Herman Nish and Charlie Kruger. I yield back any body parts left after this expo.

PLIGHT OF PRAIRIE DOGS

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, this week the National Wildlife Federation of Vienna, Virginia has petitioned to have the Black Tail Prairie Dog listed as an endangered species in 10 western states.

Understand, this was not your run-of-the-mill petition but a request for an emergency listing due to the loss of habitat. While supporters of the petition admit that the prairie dog population is not critically low, the logic seems to be that we should protect them now because some day they might be endangered.

Let me tell my colleagues about the prairie dog. They are everywhere in the West. If they want habitat, come west, we specialize in habitat for prairie dogs. With all the growth we have had along the front range of Colorado, they are still in abundance.

If we fly over the West, we see the ground plowed as if it were plowed by a steel plow. But it is not. It is by prairie dogs. If my colleagues are familiar with the West, they know that the prairie dog is no more endangered than the fly or the gopher.

Maybe we should arrange a trade: We will protect the prairie dog if the East Coast agrees to protect the gopher and the terribly endangered house fly.

By the way, prairie dogs, not dogs. They are rats.

RENO THREE

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee asked questions about a scandal that is even more serious than Filegate, even more outrageous than Travelgate, and even more troubling than Whitewater.

This Oversight Committee asked the Justice Department's two top investigators why an independent counsel has not been named to investigate mountains of evidence that the Demo-

crat Party took nearly \$3 million in illegal campaign contributions from Communist China.

One would think that the penetration of the American electoral system by a foreign power, a communist dictatorship with 13 nuclear missiles aimed at our shores no less, would not be a partisan issue.

What are we to conclude from the other side's total lack of interest in getting to the bottom of this shocking scandal? What are we to conclude from the other side's silence, total silence, in the face of FBI Director Louis Freeh and Justice Department investigator Charles LaBella's public pleas for an independent counsel to investigate this matter?

I really would hate to even speculate.

WESTERN SAHARA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge all parties involved in the 20-year conflict over Western Sahara to fulfill their commitments under the Houston Agreement and the United Nations mandate.

The parties negotiated a cease-fire with the understanding that the people of Western Sahara themselves could participate in a free, fair, and transparent referendum to decide their own future either as a part of Morocco or as an independent country.

However, the July 10 report by Secretary General Kofi Annan raises particular issues of concern about the referendum process: Obstructions to the UN opening an office in the territory, the lack of progress in the demining of the territory, and the refusal of Morocco to identify 2,000 individuals to vote in the referendum.

Mr. Speaker, a free, fair and transparent referendum is vital to lasting peace and increased stability in North Africa. All parties involved in the referendum process should maintain their commitments to the utmost.

A failure to hold a referendum would be a failure to all parties involved, including the international community.

VIOLATED CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS

(Mr. COOK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I am not in the habit of always quoting from the New York Times editorials because they are often reliably hostile to conservative values and to the Republican Party. But I think that is what makes this New York Times July 23 editorial so remarkable, which I invite everyone to consider carefully.

Charles LaBella, Attorney General Janet Reno's hand-picked investigator to oversee the campaign finance probe,

has joined FBI Director Louis Freeh in calling for an independent counsel to find out the truth about Communist Chinese money funneled into the Democratic Party during the 1996 elections.

Of all the independent counsel matters currently under investigation, this particular allegation is perhaps the most serious one of all. If one party systematically violates the campaign finance laws, compromised national security with respect to our relations with Communist China, and then lied about doing any such thing, that is an attack on democracy.

If Janet Reno continues to block this investigation, in the words of the New York Times, "this will go down as a black mark against justice every bit as historic as any in our history."

JANET RENO'S FAILURE TO UPHOLD THE LAW

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I think most of us can agree this morning that the one basic task for the Attorney General is to uphold the Nation's laws. Yet, Janet Reno is refusing to do that by not appointing an independent prosecutor to investigate campaign abuses by officials in the Clinton administration.

She is acting a lot like Rip Van Winkle, who was asleep for over a year. She has been asleep for the last year as her two top investigators, FBI Director Louis Freeh and the head of the Justice Task Force Charles LaBella have recommended an appointment of an independent prosecutor.

The law is clear. The appointment of an independent counsel should be automatically triggered with just the hint of laws being broken by such officials. What more does she need?

But meanwhile, the Attorney General Janet Reno keeps sitting on her hands blind to the evidence and, Mr. Speaker, blind to the law.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT

(Ms. DUNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 1-year anniversary of the Taxpayer Relief Act, an historic piece of legislation that consisted of the first significant tax cut since the Reagan tax cuts of the early 1980s.

Let us face it, the Taxpayer Relief Act would never have passed had it not been for a Republican Congress. Let us remember that the idea we could balance the budget and pass tax relief was ridiculed by our worthy opponents on the other side right here in this body almost daily not too long ago.

Let us also remember that welfare reform would never have happened had

it not been for the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994. The IRS reform bill passed this summer. Not a chance if the Republicans had not held the majority. And last summer's Medicare reform legislation, which postponed bankruptcy from 2001 and 2010, it took a Republican Congress to push for Medicare reform in the face of the most constant, shameless demagoguery about good-faith efforts to reform Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, elections do matter. Balanced budgets, tax cuts, welfare reform, IRS reform, and Medicare reform. That is the reality of the Republican Congress.

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NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I hope Americans will take time during the week of August 9 to note the accomplishments and contributions that truck drivers and the trucking industry have made to our lives and the prosperity of the American economy.

Consider:

From 1986 to 1996, the fatality rate for large trucks fell by 35 percent, while large truck mileage increased by 40 percent. The trucking industry employs nearly 9.5 million Americans. More than 423,000 companies in the United States are involved in trucking. In 1996 the trucking industry generated \$346 billion in gross revenues, hauling 6.5 billion tons of freight. Incidentally, that represents 82 percent of the Nation's freight bill.

I encourage everyone to celebrate the great safety record and the contribution to our well-being of America's truckers by making August 9 to August 15 National Truck Driver Appreciation Week.

MENTAL HEALTH

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, last week two members of the Capitol Police force here were killed in the line of duty here at the Capitol. The senseless death of those two police officers has proved to the world what many of us already knew namely that there are gaping holes in the network of services designed to identify and treat people with mental illness. But I tell my colleagues something good must come from this tragedy, and we must work towards a lasting memorial for these valiant officers.

More and more Americans are witnessing in their communities every day the violence resulting from the failed

policy of deinstitutionalization and untreated mental illness. Last year alone, over 1,000 homicides were directly attributable to improperly treated mental illness.

I therefore call the attention of my colleagues to the initiative that the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and I are taking, urging that Speaker GINGRICH and the House leadership appoint a task force to have a serious evaluation, including public hearings, on the failures of the system that result in violence in every community in this country that results from untreated mental illness.

I ask again, join us. Something good must come from this tragedy.

MANAGED CARE REFORM

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today the Committee on Commerce will consider legislation reauthorizing the Mammography Quality Standards Act, a program which has saved countless lives by improving the quality and accuracy of life-saving breast cancer screenings. While we improve early detection and screening of this deadly disease, women who suffer from breast cancer continue to be denied the best medical treatments available because medical decisions are too often made by insurance company HMO bureaucrats.

The bipartisan Patients Bill of Rights would ensure that women could stay in the hospital overnight following radical breast surgery. The Republican bill does not. The bipartisan Patients Bill of Rights would ensure that women can receive reconstructive surgery following mastectomy. The Republican bill does not.

This House has passed the Republican Insurance Company Bill of Rights. I urge my colleagues to do the right thing. Insist on a real Patients Bill of Rights, legislation which provides real protections for women.

2000 CENSUS

(Mr. EWING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask a simple question: Why would the President want to shut down the government over the census? He once said, "It is deeply wrong to shut down the government while we negotiate." Now he says he will veto a bill that would in fact close down the FBI, close down the courts, and bring home the Border Patrol unless Congress gives him his plan for the 2000 census. That plan is one to be done by polling, not counting individual citizens. We all know the margin of error in polling.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Congress wants to save the 2000 census. The GAO and the Commerce Department's own Inspectors General have